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August 24, 2012

The Honorable Hilda L. Solis
 Secretary
 U.S. Department of Labor
 200 Constitution Avenue, NW
 Washington, D.C. 20210

Dear Secretary Solis:

The appropriate expenditure of taxpayer funds by the U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) is of the utmost importance to the committee. This week, multiple news sources have reported that in September 2009 DOL spent \$495,000 in so-called "stimulus" funding to hire a public relations firm, McNeely, Pigott, and Fox Public Relations, LLC ("MP&F"), to promote Job Corps' "existing and new training initiatives in high-growth and environmentally friendly career areas."¹ We understand this contract used taxpayer dollars to purchase advertisements on MSNBC during "Countdown with Keith Olbermann" and "The Rachel Maddow Show." Despite the fact that these funds were made available as part of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*—legislation President Obama said was critical for immediate job creation—an examination of public records show that the contract that resulted in the advertisements on MSNBC created no jobs.² Upon further review of public records, we have found that DOL, since 2009, spent almost \$2 million on public relations services from MP&F, resulting in the creation of one job in the last reported quarter.³

¹ Jim McElhatton, *Labor Department spends stimulus funds for ads during Olbermann, Maddow shows*. The Washington Times. (August 21, 2012). <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2012/aug/21/stimulus-funds-spent-obama-ads-olbermann-maddow/>. Judson Berger, *Labor Department spent \$500G in stimulus on green-job ad blitz on Olbermann, Maddow*. FoxNews.com. (August 22, 2012) <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2012/08/22/labor-department-spent-500g-in-stimulus-funds-on-ads-during-olbermann-maddow/>

² Award Number DOLU099A29434
<http://www.recovery.gov/Transparency/RecoveryData/Pages/RecipientProjectSummary508.aspx?AwardIDSUR=19751&qtr=2009Q3> (Accessed August 23, 2012)

³ Award Number DOLJ099628680
<http://www.recovery.gov/Transparency/RecoveryData/pages/RecipientProjectSummary508.aspx?AwardIdSur=51336&AwardType=Contract>. (Accessed August 23, 2012) In total DOL has awarded MP&F \$1,975,000.00 in economic stimulus funding since September 2009.
<http://www.recovery.gov/Transparency/RecoveryData/Pages/RecipientAwardsList.aspx?duns=183142371>
 (Accessed August 23, 2012)

To better evaluate DOL's use of economic stimulus funding on this public relations contract, please provide the following to the House Committee on Education and the Workforce **no later than September 7, 2012**:

1. All documents and communications related to the contracting processes for the awards numbered DOLU099A29434 and DOLJ099628680, including DOL's contract with MP&F.
2. All documents and communications related to the development, implementation, and performance outcomes of the public relations strategy for Job Corps since January 20, 2009, including, but not limited to, all documents and communications relating to the decision to make media purchases on MSNBC during the specific time slots the Job Corps ads ran.
3. A list of the dates, attendees, and topics for all meetings and telephone conversations between DOL and MP&F relating to the development, implementation, and performance outcomes of the public relations strategy for Job Corps and all documents and communications relating to such meetings or telephone conversations.
4. The statutory or regulatory language that authorized the use of recovery funds for public relations by Job Corps.
5. All procurement records related to DOL's advertising and public relations expenses since January 20, 2009.

If you are unable to provide the requested information and materials by the date specified, please inform the committee in writing why you cannot meet the deadline, and the date by which you will provide the requested information. If you have additional questions or comments, please contact Joe Wheeler and Mandy Schaumburg of the committee staff at (202) 225-7101.

Sincerely,



JOHN KLINE
Chairman
Committee on Education and the Workforce



PHIL ROE
Chairman
Subcommittee on Health, Employment,
Labor, and Pensions

The Honorable Hilda L. Solis
August 24, 2012
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VIRGINIA FOXX
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Higher Education and
Workforce Training



TIM WALBERG
Chairman
Subcommittee on Workforce Protections

Enclosure

CC: The Honorable George Miller, Senior Democratic Member, Committee on Education and
the Workforce